MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

7 DECEMBER 1981

Habib Mission

Talks in Israel, Saudi Arabia -- During separate meetings on 4 December with Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon, U.S. special envoy Phillip Habib was told of Israel's concern over the continuing buildup of heavy arms in Lebanon by the PLO, Jerusalem radio's English service reported. The ministers also emphasized Israel's insistence that the Syrian missiles in Lebanon be removed. In a recorded interview broadcast by Jerusalem radio the next day, Shamir said he had told Habib that Israel will not tolerate for long the reinforcement and strengthening of the "terrorists" and that the United States must put a stop to this and find a solution. He noted that Habib is currently trying to prevent the situation from escalating, an approach which Israel accepts, but only for the moment. Jerusalem radio later reported that one of Habib's aims on this mission is to persuade the Syrians to withdraw some of their forces from Beirut and allow forces from Saudi Arabia, Oman and Jordan to take their place. However, the radio said, Sharon told Habib that Israel would oppose the entry of these additional Arab forces. A Jerusalem television report said Habib's mission has so far accomplished nothing.

According to Jerusalem radio, Habib reported to Israeli officials that Jordan's King Husayn assured that his government is doing everything possible to prevent terrorist activity against Israel from Jordanian territory.

Jerusalem radio reported Habib's departure from Israel on 5 December, and Riyadh radio said he met the next day with Saudi Crown Prince Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz in Riyadh. The radio gave no details of the meeting.

ITIM noted that Habib then returned to Israel where, according to Jerusalem radio, he met with Foreign Minister Shamir to report on his talks in Saudi Arabia. According to radio, he opined that Saudi Arabia would continue to be involved in efforts to obtain a settlement in Lebanon. He also reportedly complained to Shamir about the contents of his talks being publicized in Israel, which hampers his mission.

Syrian Comment -- In a strongly worded comment on Habib's mission, reported by Damascus radio, TISHRIN said as long as the United States continues to implement Israel's policy in the Middle East, it has no legal capacity to seek a solution to the problems in the region. It termed the U.S.-Israeli memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation a declaration of all-out war against the Arabs. TISHRIN went on to accuse Habib of coming to talk about the Syrian missiles in Lebanon in order to divert attention from the major issue, which is the U.S.-Israeli agreement. He has been told for the last time that the Syrian missiles are not a subject for discussion, it said. The paper also accused the United States of being behind the 29 November car bomb explosion in Damascus, which it said was an attempt to divert Syria's attention from the major issue. It concluded that if the United States wishes to achieve peace, it must first renounce its agreement with Israel and begin to follow "moral and political" logic.

Palestinian Reaction -- According to the clandestine Voice of Palestine radio, Khalil al-Wazir, Fatah Central Committee member and deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, told the Beirut magazine MONDAY MORNING that Habib's mission is part of a plan to liquidate the PLO and Palestinian and progressive joint forces on the pretext of bolstering the ceasefire in southern Lebanon. Al-Wazir asserted that the plan envisages strengthening UNIFIL and transforming it into a deterrent force that will prevent arms supplies from reaching the Palestinian Revolution and Lebanese Nationalist Movement joint forces. In a comment on the mission, Voice of Palestine claimed Habib is bringing the "seeds of disaster" and plots based on U.S. and Israeli interests, rather than a solution to the Lebanese problem. It said Habib is trying to revive the missile crisis in order to find a solution to the Lebanese problem that will satisfy Tel Aviv.

Lebanon

Reports broadcast by the Voice of Lebanon radio over the weekend said parts of Beirut were subjected to artillery and rocket fire from the western area of the city. A 7 December Voice of Lebanon report claimed the firing, which it blamed on "alien armed men," continued until after midnight Sunday.

In the south, UNIFIL forces exchanged fire with Christian militia troops attempting to take supplies to their colleagues on Hill 880, which the UNIFIL troops are surrounding, Jerusalem radio reported. On 4 December, Christian militia leader Maj Sa'd Haddad told the Voice of Hope radio that UNIFIL forces had stopped giving food and water to the besieged militia on Hill 880. He declared that this was tantamount to killing Free Lebanese people, as the PLO "terrorists" do.

Libya

Denial of Assassination Plots -- Accusing the United States of launching a "frenzied and hostile" propaganda campaign against Libya, Tripoli Voice of Arab Homeland radio branded as "lies" reports that Libya had sent mercenaries to the United States to assassinate President Ronald Reagan and that Lebanese security forces had discovered a Libyan plot to assassinate U.S. special envoy Habib while he was in Beirut. Such stories, the radio said, reflect U.S. "terrorist" policy against Libya.

Al-Qadhdhafi Interview -- According to AFP, Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi told the Italian daily CORRIERE DELLA SERA that he has "lost all confidence" in the U.S. administration, which he described as a "megalomaniac government" that persecutes the weak in order to show its strength and that needs to create external enemies in order to survive. AFP said Al-Qadhdhafi told the interviewer that, "if necessary," Libya would reconsider its nonaligned position.

Egypt

Mubarak Interview -- In an interview President Husni Mubarak granted to OCTOBER magazine, the text of which was carried by MENA, he expressed his disappointment at the results of the Fes summit conference, asserting that a successful summit would have strengthened Egypt's position. However, he said, Israel has gained from the failure of the summit because the Arabs are divided again. Mubarak said he would be willing to visit any Arab country, but only if that country had good intentions and the aim of the visit was clear. He added that he will visit Israel in February.

Turning to domestic issues, Mubarak revealed that he is holding consultations with Egyptian economists to devise a new national economic policy. He declined to reveal any details, saying the consultations have not been completed. The president also stressed his determination to fight corruption, stating that he would take anyone to court in cases of "deviations or indiscipline." He denied that the Egyptian people were not saddened at the death of the late President Anwar as-Sadat, but claimed that they were afraid to show their grief because the death was caused by sudden, violent terror and there was a plan to assassinate anyone who marched in the funeral procession.

Assassination Trial -- On 5 December the military court resumed the trial of those accused of assassinating President as-Sadat, Cairo radio reported. The radio said the defense submitted some demands and arguments, but gave no further details. It added that two prosecution witnesses testified and that the trial will continue on 7 December.

Veil, Hurd Visits -- Cairo radio reported that President Mubarak held talks with European Parliament Speaker Simone Veil on 6 December. European participation in the Sinai Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) was among the topics discussed, Veil said afterwards. Earlier, the radio noted that British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Douglas Hurd visited Egypt briefly on 4 December and held talks with his Egyptian counterpart Dr Butrus Ghali on a number of subjects, including European participation in the MFO.

Chadian Delegation -- According to MENA, President Mubarak received a Chadian delegation headed by Justice Minister Kassire Delwa Koumakoye on 6 December. After the meeting, Koumakoye said Egyptian-Chadian relations will shortly be restored.

PLO

DPFLP Leader's Statement -- The Voice of Palestine broadcast a statement by a "responsible information source" from the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) denying that DPFLP leader Nayif Hawatmah had made a statement in Prague about the Palestinian situation and the PLO Executive Committee's position on "current developments." On 4 December the Italian news agency ANSA had quoted Hawatmah as telling journalists in Prague that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat was isolated when he defended the Saudi Middle East peace plan at the last PLO Executive Committee meeting. According to ANSA, Hawatmah said 'Arafat was voted down 14 to 1 on this issue.

Qaddumi on U.S. Contacts -- According to KUNA, PLO Political Department Chief Faruq Qaddumi told the Kuwaiti paper AL-WATAN that the PLO and the United States have had low-level contacts. However, he accused the United States of using the meetings as "procrastination tactics" and of not really wanting a just peace in the Middle East. Qaddumi added that the U.S.-Israeli memorandum on strategic cooperation has turned the United States into a direct enemy of the Arabs.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

INA reported on 4 December that Iraqi forces had launched a new counteroffensive in the Susangerd region the night before and that the first stage had been successfully completed. It added that 4,000 Iranians had been killed and 152 tanks destroyed during Iraq's "offensive" over the preceding 6 days. Iraqi Armed Forces communiques carried by INA and Baghdad radio over the weekend claimed another 1,551 Iranians were killed in the Susangerd region. They also said four Iranian aircraft were shot down and admitted the loss of two Iraqi fighters. On 6 December INA reported that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn returned to Baghdad after a weeklong tour of the battlefront.

On the other hand, a 4 December Tehran radio report claimed Iranian forces had crushed the Iraqi counteroffensive in the Susangerd region, while another radio report said Iranian gendarmerie took up positions in the town of Bostan, near Susangerd, after it was cleared of Iraqi troops. On the same day, PARS reported that 500-600 Iraqi troops were killed or wounded in another "abortive" Iraqi offensive in the Ilam region on 3 December. The next day PARS reported another 370 Iraqis died in an unsuccessful attempt to regain Sableh bridge near Bostan. According to a 5 December Tehran radio report, 17 Iraqi aircraft had been shot down over the preceding 4 days and armed forces communiques broadcast by Tehran radio over the weekend claimed another 3 Iraqi aircraft were downed. President 'Ali Khamene'i told a Tehran radio correspondent that since the Iranian offensive began on 29 November, 2,500 Iraqi troops have been killed.

Iraq

INA reported that after a 5 December meeting with USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium Deputy Chairman Pavel Gilashvili, who had arrived in Baghdad at the head of a Soviet delegation, First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan expressed satisfaction with the level and development of Iraqi-Soviet friendship and cooperation.

Gulf Affairs

GCC Request to Oman -- Citing the Kuwaiti paper AL-QABAS, AFP reported that five members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) asked the sixth member, Oman, to reduce its military cooperation with the United States, in return for which the Council pledged to pressure the PDRY to stop meddling in Omani affairs. The report followed a denial last week by the Saudi information minister of a Washington POST story that the GCC had offered Oman $1.2 billion to refuse military facilities to foreign forces. QNA reported

a similar denial of that story by Omani Information and Youth Affairs Minister 'Abd al-'Aziz ar-Rawwas and the Kuwaiti paper AS-SIYASAH said the GCC secretary general also denied it.

Kreisky Tour -- KUNA reported the arrival of Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky in Kuwait on 5 December on the first stop of a tour that will include Bahrain and the UAE. KUNA reports the next day noted that Kreisky held separate meetings with the amir, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad as-Sabah, and with Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah as-Sabah. Before leading Kuwait, Kreisky held a press conference during which he asserted that Israel does not want to see a solution to the Palestinian problem and urged the Palestinians to persist in demanding their rights, KUNA reported. It added that he also spoke favorably of the Saudi peace plan. Monte Carlo radio said while he was in Kuwait, Kreisky met with Fatah Central Committee member Khalid al-Hassan. WAKH later reported Kreisky's arrival in Bahrain on the second leg of his tour.

Israel

The Jerusalem POST reported on 6 December that the general strike in the Gaza Strip continued over the weekend and that some 400 schoolchildren from the area were arrested after clashing with security forces.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem radio reported that Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon would meet the Yamit action committee on 7 December.

Afghanistan

Citing travellers' accounts, AFP reported an intensive three-pronged attack by Soviet and Afghan troops on the rebel-held city of Qandahar. It said the operation, which lasted from 26 November to 2 December, led to unprecedented casualties but that the rebels did not give up control of the city.

FBIS DAILY REPORT

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AFP: SOVIET TROOPS LAUNCH ATTACK ON QANDAHAR

BKD51731 Hong Kong AFP in English 1723 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Text] Quetta, Pakistan, 5 Dec (AFP) -- Soviet troops have launched a three-pronged attack on Qandahar, using long-range cannons and gunship helicopters to flush out Moslem rebels holding the second biggest Afghan city since September, travellers arriving in this border city said today. Major parts of the city, including the main bazaar and city streets, were under the rebels' control but Qandahar airport, where a Soviet air base is located, is being used as a launching pad against the guerrillas, the sources said.

Residents reported "unprecedented casualties" in the "very intensive" Soviet-Afghan air and land attacks. According to travellers, shops were closed for two days early this month in protest against the high civilian casualty rate in three adjoining villages -- (Karz), (Zakar Shareef) and (Kolchabad) -- all located in the proximity of the main airport, where Soviet tanks are stationed.

The Soviet offensive began on Nov 26 and continued till Dec 2, Afghan sources said.

However, 95 percent of the 230,000 residents in the city were fully backing the mujahedeen, the travellers said. Since the rebels' takeover of the city, several joint Soviet-Afghan attempts to recapture it reportedly failed but this time the Soviets were using a changed strategy, travellers said.

Using 22-mm cannons and with MI-24 gunship helicopters support, they surrounded the three suburban villages and heavily shelled the area. In (Zakar Shareef) alone the Soviet shelling, starting at 0900, continued till 2000, travellers said, adding that another eastern sector town, (Deh Khawaja), was a "living monument of the enemy's atrocities." The entire shopping centre had been destroyed and no house was left there without cracks, they said.

The sources, quoting residents, said before the attack the Soviet-Afghan soldiers carried out a manhunt and took away 21 males of the town to be ultimately "slaughtered in a farm." "Nobody knows their crime. Most of them were clergyman from the town's religious school," travellers said. (Deh Khawaja) is a sacred place in Afghanistan where the shrine of the Moslem saint, (Khawaja Najumuddin), is situated. The religious school, Najm al-Madaris, in the area is names after this saint.

Travellers said the Kabul-Qandahar highway was already blocked and last month the Soviets, prior to the attack, mined the other communication links. The night watch and security search has been intensified while day-time ambushes continued till three days back, the sources said. The long distance shelling continued at night time on residential quarters to terrorise citizens who watch the scene from rooftops, they said.

A couple of Afghan tanks were able to guard only a few vital places in the garrison town of Qandahar and the rebel Afghans, though shaky due to the new strategy, have still "not abandoned their control" and the majority of the population was obeying them, they said.

SOVIETS REPORTEDLY CAPTURE, KILL 145 AFGHANS

GF041908 Karachi MASHRIQ in Urdu 2 Dec 81 p 1

[Text] Peshawar, 1 Dec (APP) -- Soviet troops have attacked (Bada), 8 km from Jalalabad, and captured and shot 145 persons. Reports indicate that on 26 November Soviet troops attacked and cordoned off (Bada). They then captured 145 persons between the ages of 35 and 65, lined them up in a nearby open space and opened fire on them. All the persons died instantly. According to mujahidin sources, there were only two survivors [as published], who were badly wounded. (Bada) is a busy place and is known for the famous religious school Najm al-Madaris, which is now closed.

GANDHI ON DEFENSE, DOMESTIC OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN

BK0516211 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Text] The prime minister has expressed confidence that the defense forces and the people are fully prepared to meet any eventuality on our borders. Addressing Congress-I workers in Bombay today, Mrs Gandhi pointed out that the country faced constant threats because of a massive pile-up of arms in its neighboring countries and mounting tension in the Indian Ocean. She said the fleets of many countries are patrolling the Indian Ocean.

Mrs Gandhi exhorted her party workers to rejuvenate the organization to face the increasing threats of external aggression and the opposition's propaganda. She urged them to give up infights in the party.

Referring to economic development, the prime minister said every effort is being made to improve the lot of the masses. In this task she said party workers have a major role in implementing the government's policies and redressing people's grievances. She said: We cannot depend on government officials alone for this.

Mrs Gandhi deplored that a campaign is being carried out by the opposition and the press to project the government and her party as incapable of solving the problems faced by the country. A campaign of villification has also been launched against them.

Mrs Gandhi said the government and her party are being held responsible for the exploitation of harijans, workers and the poor. She urged the people not to be swayed by this campaign.

RAO REITERATES CLAIM OVER ALL OF KASHMIR

BK0409S7 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 4 Dec 81

[Excerpts] India has offered full cooperation in any long term program as a followup of the Cancun summit to eradicate hunger by the end of the century. This was stated by External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao in the Rajya Sabha today.

About President Ziaul Haq's recent remarks on Kashmir boundary, Narasimha Rao reiterated that the whole of Jammu and Kashmir is constitutionally and legally an integral part of India. Rao said he does not see any change in Pakistan's stance on the boundary issue.

1982 TRADE PROTOCOL SIGNED WITH POLAND

BK0409S3 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 4 Dec 81

[Text] India and Poland have signed a trade protocol for 1982 envisaging a total turnover of approximately 200 crore rupees both ways. It represents an increase of 20 percent over the provisions made for the trade protocol in 1981.

BRIEFS

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES PLUMMET -- New Delhi, 6 Dec (AFP) -- India's foreign exchange reserves have plummeted by Rs 13,790 million during the current fiscal year (about U.S. $1,379 million) to Rs 34,420 million (about U.S. $3,442 million), the lowest level since 1976-77, the FINANCIAL EXPRESS disclosed. This signifies a depletion of exchange reserves at the rate of Rs 1,724 million per month (U.S. $172 million). [Text] [Hong Kong AFP in English 0712 GMT 6 Dec 81 BK]

LETTER SIGNED ON PURCHASE OF U.S. F-16'S

BRD51721 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Text] Pakistan has signed a letter of offer and agreement with the United States for the purchase of the first batch of six F-16 jets to Pakistan.

The Pakistani ambassador to the United States signed the letter on behalf of the Pakistan Government in Washington.

UN INFORMED OF LATEST AFGHAN AIRSPACE VIOLATIONS

BRD60642 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Dec 81

[Text] Pakistan has brought the serious violation of its airspace from Afghanistan on Wednesday last [2 December] to the attention of the United Nations.

In a letter to Secretary General Dr Waldheim, released at the United Nations yesterday, Pakistani Ambassador Niaz A. Naik said that Afghan helicopters strafed and fired rockets inside Pakistani territory, resulting in loss of lives and property damage.

The letter, which gives complete details of the incident, has been issued as a document of the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

HAQ ON NEED FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDIA

BRD41559 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 4 Dec 81

[Text] President Mohammad Ziaul Haq has said: I am confident that the hand of friendship that Pakistan has extended toward India will bring positive results. Talking to newsmen in Wazirabad today, the president said that Pakistan has always desired better relations with India and has been constantly trying to achieve this.

He said: The two countries have fought three wars during the last 35 years and I, without suggesting who was at fault, will only say that the time has come when both countries should work to improve relations on the basis of equality, giving due respect to each other's independence and sovereignty.

The president said the friendly relations between the two countries should grow not only at the governmental level but also among the people of the two countries so that the real purpose of mutual friendship could be fulfilled. The newspapers of both the countries can play a very important role in this process.

The president urged Pakistani journalists to present Pakistan's stand on this issue with accuracy and clarity.

In reply to a question about the Federal Council, the president said the government is looking for persons to serve as members of this council who are truly worthy of the position and whose records are spotless. He said the basic qualification for this position is that the individual must possess genuine Islamic awareness and have a firm belief in Pakistan's ideology. [passage indistinct]

KASHANI, /DEPUTY TALK ON WAR AT FRIDAY PRAYERS

LD041412 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Dec 81

[Excerpts] Millions of our Islamic compatriots took part today in the unifying Friday prayers. Tehran University, this meeting place of the lovers of God, today as on other Fridays, witnessed vast throngs of the monotheistic and revolutionary people of Tehran who were taking part in the glorious religiopolitical Friday prayers, led by Hojjat ol-Eslam Emami-Kashani.

Before the sermons, Mr Hadi Khamene'i, deputy in the Islamic Consultative Assembly, made a speech and talked in detail about the war imposed by the Iraqi regime on the Islamic Republic of Iran and the benefits accrued from it and about the role of the minigroups, the plots of the enemies of the revolution and the export of revolution to the world.

In part of his speech he analyzed the plans of America and other superpowers to foment this war against us and against our revolution and said: The enemies had hoped this war would result in many gains for themselves and innumerable losses for us; but fortunately all these calculations were proved wrong. Our economic self-sufficiency in making the necessary war materiel and in repairing war weapons and machinery has surprised the world. America was also hoping that the war would create many unpleasant political problems for our nation. Internally, the counterrevolutionary elements and the forces opposed to the regime of the Islamic Republic who have been trained by the aliens were mobilized to intensify their activities and to complete America's plan to exert political pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran from two directions, thus weakening Islamic revolution. Nevertheless, not only were political pressures unable to prevent us from engaging in the war and from our military activities, but on the contrary, the existence of the war and the unprecedented epic results of this war helped us to resolve our political problems faster and better than ever. Our enemies regarded this war as a means for our domestic and political defeat, but with the will of God, this war proved the opposite. America organized this war in order to prevent the rallying of world revolutionaries to the Iranian nation. However, the war reversed the situation for the revolution and neither isolated us on the world scene nor prevented us from shouldering the responsibility of exporting the revolution to the world. On the contrary, it accelerated our activities in this respect.

Mr Hadi Khamene'i added: The war has increased capability and readiness of our fighting forces. Today, our forces in the battlefields are reminiscent of the everlasting epics of the forces of the early days of Islam. This shows that our Islamic revolution has given the lie to all the war formulas and calculations, and that it is preparing for its greater enterprises on the world scene.

In another part of his speech, Mr Hadi Khamene'i said: Fahd's plan and the disgraceful defeat of the Fes conference were a sign of the active presence of the Islamic revolution of Iran on the world scene and among the nations. So long as the revolutions of the region do not follow the example of the Islamic revolution of Iran and so long as they do not prepare for themselves three factors, that is, ideology, ideological unity and Islamic leadership, they have no hope of victory.

Then Hojjat ol-Eslam Emami Kashani delivered the prayer sermons and in the first sermon talked of the victory achieved by the fighters of Islam in Bostan. Citing a few verses from the glorious Koran, he said: God says that if there were no defense against falsehood, the Earth would undoubtedly be filled with corruption. In the glorious Koran the creator of the world says: The world has been based on the principle that truth and falsehood confront one another, but eventually the time will come when the men and women following the truth will so struggle against falsehood that they will completely throw falsehood in the rubbish bin of history. Today we see signs of this.

Then Hojjat ol-Eslam Emami Kashani, referring to the verses of the glorious Koran, described in detail the special characteristics of the fighters in the path of truth and the forces of Islam, saying: Bostan is so important from a strategic viewpoint that the great victory of the forces of Islam in Bostan broke the backbone of the aggressive Iraqi Armed Forces and the attack of the Jerusalem Path scattered them. America ordered its servant Saddam to attack Iran and achieved nothing by it; it raised the issue of Fahd's plan and achieved nothing by that either; now America is trying to hatch other plots. For instance, America and Israel are signing military treaties. Zionist military experts have held some meetings with American officials and Reagan's special envoy has come to the region. Yet we say: America, you should know that the Islamic world and the Islamic nations have awoken from their slumber, and despite all your plots and efforts, the Islamic community is vigilant and aware.

In part of his first sermon Hojjat ol-Eslam Emami Kashani said:

[Begin recording] From a strategic viewpoint Bostan is so important that the backbone of the aggressive Iraqi Army was broken with the help and the might of the Almighty God. As I have been informed, 90 percent of the enemy supplies came through this route. They had placed a mortar at the foot of every tree and at every foothill they had built trenches and foxholes for themselves. It was a strong fortress for them and was protected by three mechanized, armored battalions. Yet in the name of God and with the slogan of Jerusalem, the forces of Islam attacked them in such a way that they were crushed and they were repulsed. Now we see that America has become desperate.

PRIME MINISTER INSPECTS SOUTHERN FRONTS

LD051126 Tehran PARS in English 0942 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Text] Tehran, 5 Dec (PARS) -- Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi, who together with Oil Minister Gharazi inspected the southern fronts on Thursday, returned to Tehran on Friday evening. In an interview with PARS in Susangerd the prime minister, when asked how far the Iranian forces would continue their advance, said: "We have repeatedly said we have no designs on others' territory but if Saddam's forces stubbornly resist our forces here then we will possibly have to carry our attack into Iraqi territory.

On reviewing the remains of slain Iraqi soldiers, Musavi said it was regrettable these men had to die uselessly but added Iran had no choice but to push on determinedly. He further said whoever had not been present in the fronts and followed the war's progress on the maps would fail to understand the extent of the recent operation.

The prime minister said that the commanders had explained to him that the enemy had been suppressed in that region and large areas of Iranian territory were liberated. He added that naturally the pressures to expel the enemy would not let up until every last enemy soldier was pushed out of Iranian territory. He said Iraqi attacks on civilian targets were but the savage reaction of a defeated enemy in its death throes.

Referring to his meeting with the army commanders and other forces Musavi said that he felt a discernable improvement in morale and said an Islamic, brotherly atmosphere prevailed among the officers, soldiers and other forces.

PARS correspondent reported that the prime minister and acting governor general of Khuzestan Province, (Tavalaie), for some hours together inspected the liberated city of Bostan, the fronts, and from afar looked at some enemy positions to the northwest of Bostan. With other officials of the province the prime minister reviewed various provincial issues, particularly postwar reconstruction.

In Ahvaz the prime minister addressed the Islamic revolutionary guards there saying that whatever Iran lacked in material hardware was more than made up for by these forces' faith whose unity, he added, would lead to such military efficiency which would astonish the world.

On Friday afternoon Prime Minister Musavi met and conferred with the commander of the Ground Forces, Colonel Seyyed-Shirazi, and the commander of the IRGC [Islamic Revolution Guards Corps], Mohsen Reza'i.

After his arrival in Ahvaz the prime minister met and talked with those wounded in the recent operations, paid his respects at the graves of the martyrs and called on the martyrs' families.

"What we won in the fronts of Bostan, north of Neisan [as received], south of Karkheh, north of Abadan was due to the faith of our combatants," said the prime minister adding that the war would continue until the overthrow of the fascist Iraqi regime as Imam Khomeyni had said. Musavi said that the issue of the war had priority over everything else.

Comments on Bostan 'Victory'

LD051436 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Interview with Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi -- date and place not given, recorded]

[Excerpt] [Question] Mr Prime Minister, would you please tell us your assessment of the overall situation on the battlefronts and of the morale of our warriors, after visiting the liberated city of Bostan?

[Answer] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Glory to the imam of the Islamic nation, the righteous imam of the oppressed who created such enthusiasm and fervour among our nation. We witnessed a small example of this enthusiasm on the battlefields -- a very shining example. All that one can see on the battlefronts is epic devotion and the sacrifice of the dearest belongings a human being can possess. They are sacrificing their dearest possession for the sake of a high target and great values, the divine values which have been realized in our revolutionary society.

Before commenting on the importance of this victory, I would like to talk about this deep and fundamental change which has occurred in the morale -- and I witnessed this change on the battlefronts. This is the real victory. On the battlefields, among the dust, sand, silt, blood and fire, you can see 12-13-year-old children bearing arms next to old men of 50 and 60. There are all kinds. It seems as if our forces are a reflection of the people. You can see people of all levels in that place, the same mixture that you can see in mosques now. These people, under the showers of Iraqi bombs dropped from MiG's and under heavy pounding from the enemy, raised their hands as symbols of victory whenever they saw a vehicle passing. They raised their hands and shouted. God is the greatest!

The battlefront itself is vast. No matter how much the newspapers write about or discuss this victory, they can only cover a small corner of the reality of it. First of all, the front is vast and we have perhaps had our biggest advance. In this deep advance, it has become apparent from the remains of countless numbers of enemy tanks and vehicles that the enemy was heavily armed. Only amazing faith would have been able to pound them so badly in their strong trenches.

On our return from Bostan, a direction was chosen for us through the conquered trenches. There were so many piles of weapons, burned tanks and vehicles that we were really bewildered. This did not include other weapons and equipment captured by our forces as booty. Much has been gathered and there is still much more scattered in the plain.

Although hundreds of Iraqi corpses have been buried, because of (?the strategic situation) on the front it seems there was not sufficient time to bury all the bodies. As a result, when we were moving through these trenches, we could see the corpses of Iraqi troops who had fallen on the ground like the autumn leaves. We are really sorry about this. When I saw these corpses, I clearly witnessed the truth of the Koranic verse about the people who ruined this world and the next.

Why did these forces come here? What on earth are they fighting for? Who are they fighting for? Our (?aim) is clear. We are fighting for the divine rule, to defend our Islamic homeland, to defend the Islamic Republic of Iran and to expel the infernal forces who, under command of the madman Saddam, with his blasphemous and anti-Islamic ideas, attacked our country. Our forces are fighting against these infernal forces in our own territory. When a person comes and fights our forces on our land under such commanders, what is he hoping for?

We wonder what the Iraqi forces hope to achieve. We know they are forced to come to the battlefront. But we are still wondering when these forces will wake up to revolt against their mad commanders. I think blows like this one [at Bostan] will force the Iraqi Armed Forces to conclude that they should no longer remain under Saddam's command and that they should return home to the suffering millions in Iraq.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, [words indistinct] what will be the effect of this victory on our compatriots and our combatants on other battlefronts?

[Answer] First, you know that this battle continued day and night for 7-8 days. This is unique in kind, because the enemy launched several counteroffensives and was defeated again and again. It seems that such defeats could lead to the eventual crushing of the Iraqi Armed Forces if they continue in the same way. An example of this happened last Thursday night when they attacked the Sableh bridge. They wanted to cut our forces in half, surprise our forces and reach Bostan. But our forces showed amazing mobility and, through extraordinary devotion, repulsed the attack at 2400 on Friday. I was in the command headquarters at 0900. Our brave commanders on the front were saying that they had now halted the enemy.

When we set off for Bostan, the Bostan fronts were quite busy and the battle raging fiercely. The problem ended around 0100 or 0200.

During the Iraqi counteroffensive, in their so-called surprise attack, they lost around 50 tanks. If this pattern continues, with the manpower shortage Iraq is facing now because its masses have lost faith with the government, it will naturally act as the prelude to a disgraceful internal defeat which will overthrow the regime.

On the other hand, a careful examination of the map shows that this attack cut off the link between the Iraqi forces north and south of Khuzestan because our forces have almost reached the border in their advance and Iraq cannot move forces from the other side of the border very easily because there is a great swamp between Iran and Iraq. As for mobility and transferring forces from north to south, Iraq has to cover an extra distance of approximately 300 km. This could have a decisive effect on the progress of the war. The Iraqis themselves realize the importance of this issue and that is why they are resorting to last-ditch efforts by waging continuous counteroffensives in order to defeat our forces.

KHOMEYNI ATTENDS SUPREME DEFENSE COUNCIL MEETING

LD061124 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 6 Dec 81

[Text] Following the great victories of the brave combatants of the army of Islam on the Khuzestan fronts, the Supreme Defense Council held a session this morning in the presence of Imam Khomeyni, the commander in chief.

The session was attended by members of the Supreme Defense Council, namely, Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, the president; Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council; Mir-Hoseyn Musavi, the prime minister; Brig Gen Qasem 'Ali Zahirnezhad, the chief of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Colonel Salimi, the defense minister; Colonel Seyyed Shirazi, the commander of the Ground Forces; Brother Mohsen Reza'i, the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps; and Kamal Gharazi, [the head of the War Publicity Staff and also the head of PARS NEWS AGENCY].

In this session, which lasted for more than 2 hours and which Hojjat ol-Eslam Hajj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni also attended, the latest events on the battlefronts and the recent victories of the heroes of the army of Islam were studied.

At the conclusion of this session President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i gave an interview to our correspondent and discussed the issues raised in the imam's presence. He said that in the course of the victory of the soldiers of Islam, more than 2,500 soldiers of the aggressive Iraqi forces were killed; the bodies of 1,500 of them have been buried by our forces in a cemetery called the cemetery of the aggressive Iraqi Ba'thists.

The president also announced that approximately 100 tanks were seized intact by the forces of Islam and that hundreds of Iraqi soldiers were captured.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE 718

LD041754 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 4 Dec 81

[Communique 718 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. The efforts of the strong combatants of Islam to annihilate and crush the aggressive and mercenary enemy are continuing decisively on all the southern and western fronts of the country. While defending their positions our forces are opening heavy-weapon fire on the bases, fortifications and weapons of the aggressors and inflicting new losses and casualties on them.

According to a report from the air force another enemy aircraft was hit by our fighter aircraft today. It crashed at 1201 in an area north of Hamidiyeh.

At 0030 on 4 December the army of blasphemy intended to launch another offensive in the Bostan area. However, it met with resistance from our forces. At least two mechanized battalions belonging to the enemy were destroyed and the enemy was forced to retreat.

Exchanges of fire continued on the Abadan fronts during the past 24 hours. Our heroes' fire destroyed two ammunition dumps, two assembly points and one vehicle belonging to the Saddamists and set on fire several trenches and foxholes. At least 20 Iraqi soldiers were either killed or wounded. The Saddamist army's heavy-weapon fire on the residential areas in Abadan destroyed five houses and killed or wounded a number of our compatriots.

By firing on enemy positions in the Wasiliyah area our forces managed to destroy several observation posts and one assembly building belonging to the enemy. In addition the movement of the enemy vehicles on the Al-Faw-Basra road was stopped.

In western Dezful, the combative personnel of the ground forces managed to destroy 1 ammunition dump, 1 personnel carrier and 16 trenches belonging to the enemy. The personnel in the trenches were killed. Exchanges of fire between our forces and Saddam's forces, who are being annihilated, continued on all of the western fronts with the combatants of Islam enjoying complete superiority. Effective losses and casualties were inflicted on the enemy. Accurate statistics will be announced later.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE 719

LD051712 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Communique 719 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. Dear compatriots: A part of self-sacrifices and operations of the combatants of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the situation on war fronts are as follows:

During today's dogfight between two fighters belonging to the Iranian Air Force and five enemy planes on the southern fronts, two Iraqi planes were downed. According to reports, at 1245 yesterday, one of the invading Iraqi planes was hit by our antiaircraft fire and crashed south of Sableh. Fighting continues sporadically around Bostan with artillery and heavy-weapon exchanges. Our strong combatants have consolidated their positions and are returning the enemy fire.

Exchanges of fire around Abadan between our victorious forces and that of the enemy continued sporadically, and west of Dezful our powerful combatants silenced enemy fire and inflicted some damage and losses. Gendarmerie forces opened fire on enemy positions and strongholds along the Abadan front and the supply route between Basra and Al-Faw, thus preventing enemy supply vehicles from moving. They destroyed one [word indistinct] and one of their mortars and killed a number of their troops.

The combatants of the police unit on the Abadan front destroyed four Iraqi trenches and one 106-mm cannon and killed a number of enemy troops.

Yesterday, fighting continued on most western fronts with artillery and mortar exchanges. Around Meymak the fighting was more intense.

FORTY IRAQI DESERTERS EXECUTED IN HOVAYZEH

LD061928 Tehran PARS in English 1844 GMT 6 Dec 81

[Text] Tehran, 6 Dec (PARS NEWS AGENCY) -- Reports from Ahvaz today said that 40 commissioned officers and NCO's of the Otaibeh battalion of Iraq have been executed in Hovayzeh before a group of other Iraqi officers after summary trials on charges of retreating before the offensive of the Iranian troops this week. During the Iranian offensive near Sableh, 370 Iraqi soldiers were killed and 55 enemy tanks destroyed.

AUTHORITIES CRITICIZED FOR RESTRICTING FREEDOM

TA071022 (Clandestine) National Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran 1730 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Unattributed commentary: "One Should Abstain From Superficiality and Monopolism"]

[Text] Dear compatriots: During the last 2 or 3 weeks the people of our homeland have witnessed certain acts that are not only contrary to the explicit text of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to Imam Khomeyni's guidelines concerning the implementation of the Constitution, but tend toward fulfilling the goals of the Bani-Sadrs and the Qotbzadehs, and in other words, the aims of world-devouring America.

The recent statements by the public prosecutor -- the cutting edge of which were aimed at individuals associated with the true revolutionary organizations -- on the purging of revolutionary institutions have made the concern of the people two-fold, and have posed the following just question: Where are they leading the Iranian nation's popular and anti-imperialist revolution?

The people are rightly and justly saying that the Iranian revolution is not the fruit of the effort, struggle and sacrifices of only a specific group, but rather it is the result of the long struggle of all strata of the nation, of all true, active and revolutionary groups, parties and organizations who today as well are honestly and sincerely supporting the revolution and its gains and the Imam's popular and anti-imperialist line. Irrespective of their ideas and political ideologies, these true revolutionary parties and organizations are in the line of the revolution and are locked in combat with the satans in the frontline of battle against world-devouring U.S. inperalism and the revolution's internal and external enemies and are exerting all their efforts toward victory in this struggle and toward promoting the lofty and popular aims of the Iranian revolution.

It is a cause of deep regret that some circles are not paying or do not want to pay heed to these facts. By their ill-considered measures these circles are treading on a path that was once trodden by the compromising liberals and the Bani-Sadrs. Cutting the tongue and breaking the pen of the people [referring to MARDOM, organ of the Tudeh Party, which in Persian means people] -- a tongue and a pen which have been at the service of the revolution and which had and continues to have an important role in exposing the conspiracies and plots of U.S. imperialism and its agents and mercenaries within our country -- is only to the benefit of the counterrevolution and its imperialist backers.

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran has declared permissible and free the activity of parties and organizations that are not opposed to the Constitution and the Islamic Republic. This principle also applies to newspapers that adhere to the Constitution. One should refrain forever from violating the principles of the Constitution in respect to all strata of the nation and to all political parties and organizations committed to the revolution and supporters of the system of the Islamic Republic, and should desist from setting on fire in the same place the wet and the dry, and cause further division and discord among the true revolutionary forces, and inevitably the weakening of the revolution. Such acts are only to the benefit of world-devouring America.

Our homeland's tense and critical situation dictates that all exert their efforts to create alliance and unity of word and action among the forces that are true to the revolution. The creation of alliance and the establishment of a united popular and anti-imperialist front that will encompass all true revolutionary forces, groups and parties, whether religious or nonreligious, Islamic or non-Islamic, is a historical and destiny-making necessity. The duty of every true revolutionary and every responsible individual, particularly the Islamic authorities, is to assist in founding such a front. Those who act contrary to this are, wittingly or unwittingly, rendering aid to the foes of the Iranian revolution.

The Iranian revolution has brought to the Iranian nation the gift of the freedom of speech, pen, thought and activity. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran has guaranteed these freedoms as well. It is incumbent upon the Islamic authorities to ensure the freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution, whether political or social freedoms, and to end all restrictions on some of the political parties and organizations that respect the Constitution and that according to the imam are not at war with the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Any measure taken by any authority to restrict the freedoms stipulated in the constitution is to the benefit of the counterrevolution and will fulfill the demand and aim of world-devouring America. The people of our homeland demand that an end be put to superficiality, monopolism and self-criticism, and subsequently to the inquisition that is being applied by any authority.

SRI LANKA

RADIO MOSCOW INVITED TO SET UP RELAY STATION

BKD60749 Hong Kong AFP in English 0657 GMT 6 Dec 81

[Text] Colombo, 6 Dec (AFP) -- Sri Lanka has told the Soviet Union that Radio Moscow may establish a relay station here, reliable sources said.

The offer was made by Foreign Minister Shanun Hameed to the deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, N.P. Firyubin, during the Soviet deputy minister's official visit to Sri Lanka recently.

The invitation was extended in accordance with Sri Lanka's nonaligned policy, the sources said.

The sources added that Sri Lanka has provided facilities in this country for relay stations of the Voice of America and Deutsche Welle of the Federal Republic of Germany. As two Western powers had been granted facilities, it was felt that similar concessions be extended to the Soviet Union with the necessary safeguards as in the other cases.

In Parliament last week opposition members criticised the government for providing extended facilities to the Voice of America and charged that there has been a shift in its nonaligned posture.

There has been no response from the Soviet Union to Mr Hameed's offer, the sources said.

Observers here said that the Soviet Union probably does not need any relay stations because it could beam its broadcasts to most parts of the globe from stations located within its vast territory and also from other countries which are closely aligned to it.

ATHULATHMUDALI COMMENTS ON VISIT TO INDIA

BKD51142 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 5 Dec 81

[Text] Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said yesterday that President of India Neelam Sanjiva Reddy and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had expressed satisfaction at the way that the Sri Lanka Government had dealt with its economic, social and minority problems. Speaking on his recent visit to India, the minister said that he had visited the Sri Lanka trade commissioner's office in Bombay and found that it had not suffered any serious damage during the recent disturbance there.

The minister said the government intended to develop Trincomalee into a commercial port. He had made the people of India aware through several seminars of the commercial ventures that had been initiated at Trincomalee and had also defended the government's decision to permit an American enterprise to start a venture in the Trincomalee harbor. This question had been raised by Mrs Gandhi.

Speaking to the press on his return from visits to China and the Philippines and India, Athulathmudali said that Sri Lanka would not permit any activity in its territory that might prove hostile to India. In line with the policy which had been followed for many years, no naval bases would be made available to any foreign country. The facilities made available to vessels of the United States were also made available to those of the Soviet Union and China. He announced that Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union had reached an agreement on the sharing of cargo details which were to be worked out shortly. Similar agreements were being negotiated with countries in Eastern Europe. He disclosed that the new trade agreement with China provided for each country to buy 60-million-rupees worth of goods from the other.